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U.S.-Soviet relations could be affected by draft dodger crackdown

South African schools

From Associated Press reports

MOSCOW - Soviet spokesmen deny that superpower relations are worsening in the run-up to the Moscow summit, and say they hope Washington won't react harshly to a crackdown on draft dodgers in rebellious republics.

"I would not describe what has taken place in U.S.-Soviet relations in the last month as a chill," Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitaly Churkin told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

But White House officials already have criticized a decision to use Soviet troops to round up deserters and draft dodgers in seven republics, including

the three secessionist Baltic states. And U.S. authorities have warned

for close to a year that using military force in the Baltics could damage superpower ties.

Soviet authorities say the crackdown is an internal matter, necessary to continue President Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms.

"The leadership must take some decisions that will be unpopular," Churkin said. "If we want to go ahead with the political and economic changes in this country, we must have discipline and observance of law."

The crackdown comes on top of what

U.S. officials view as several recent shocks to American-Soviet relations, including last-minute snags in a strategic arms treaty that was to be signed at the Moscow summit, now scheduled for Feb. 11-13.

The Americans also are reeling from the resignation of reformist Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, from his warning that "dictatorship is coming" to the Soviet Union, and from accusations by the KGB chief that U.S. intelligence is trying to destabilize the Soviet Union.

U.S. officials worry that Gorbachev,

publics, will rely more on traditional instruments of power: the KGB security police, the Communist Party and the armed forces.

Such a retreat from Gorbachev's "new thinking" could weaken Soviet support for Washington if and when U.S. President George Bush orders U.S. forces into action against Iraq.

Bush's spokesman Marlin Fitzwater expressed concern Tuesday over Gorbachev's crackdown on draft dodgers, saying it was "a serious step toward the escalation of tension within the U.S.S.R. and makes the peaceful as he loses political control of the re- evolution of relations among the people

of the Soviet Union more difficult." Fitzwater's tough talk jarred with

recent expressions of mutual admiration by U.S. and Soviet officials. "Things looked a lot better in U.S.-Soviet relations three months ago than they do now," said one American official, who spoke on condition he not be further identified.

In the Soviet view, the Americans are overreacting, and that reaction could jeopardize the summit, where the two presidents are expected to sign a Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty to slash nuclear arsenals by up to half.

"To expect for the two sides to deal

open doors to blacks

with issues as difficult as these without, differences would be naive," Churkin, said.

"There is room for future progress, and we can make the further steps that both sides have agreed we should take, including signing agreements at the summit, the most important of them the START treaty," Churkin said. "Since" the START treaty is almost complete, it would not be to anyone's benefit not to sign it."

The Soviets propose that deputy foreign ministers meet in Geneva to hammer out START problems, Churkin said.

Party plans boycott of Albanian elections

From Associated Press reports

VIENNA, Austria-Albania's first opposition party in 46 years is considering boycotting parliamentary elections unless the Communist leadership postpones them, a party leader said Wednesday.

The vote is set for next month, and the opposition says it needs more time to prepare.

Also Wednesday, Justice Minister Enver Halili told state television the government was considering pardoning 170 political prisoners. The government already announced Saturday it was pardoning 202 prisoners jailed for political offenses and for trying to defect.

The government has never disclosed the number of political prisoners, but the state news agency ATA said 392 prisoners were pardoned since June --including those whose pardon was announced Saturday.

Word that the opposition was considering boycotting the Feb. 10 bal-

TARHEEL TANNING

loting came from a leading member of the Democratic Party, Petrit Dodbeba. He said a six-man negotiating team failed to persuade Communist Party chief Ramiz Alia to agree to a postponement during a meeting Tuesday.

"We are still not competitive toward the party in power," Dodbeba, who was reached by telephone in Tirana, told The Associated Press. "I think if we cannot get the elections postponed we should not take part."

ATA quoted Alia, who is nominal head of state, as saying that "with every passing day" Albania's political and economic problems are making free elections more urgent.

An initial request by the Democratic Party for a postponement of the elections was turned down last month.

The party was founded Dec. 12 after Alia, under growing public pressure, allowed the establishment of independent political organizations. More recently, an ecological party was set up.

NEWEST

CHAPEL HILL'S

From Associated Press reports

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa-Black students attended some white public schools for the first time Wednesday, beginning a new term that brings fundamental changes to public education in South Africa.

A government plan permitting schools to determine their own admissions policies was passed in September of last year.

Previously, public schools were strictly segregated.

Some of the public schools began new terms on Wednesday. About 205 of more than 2,000 white public schools have elected to integrate. Most held a referendum among parents that required at least 80 percent to vote and 90 percent of those voting to approve open admissions.

At Parkview Primary School, black and white children played enthusiastischool field.

Michalopoulos, 12. "It's no big deal."

walked together on their first day as classmates. Karabo Mapela, 12, said she was very happy to attend Parkview, even if it meant traveling 12 miles from her home in the black township of Soweto.

Her white friend, Linda Temlett, 11, welcomed the change. "I don't know why it took so long,"

she said.

But strong opposition to integrating schools still exists, particularly from right-wing whites who support apartheid.

While the integration plan is a significant step toward unifying South Africa's education system, it remains limited. Under national education laws. schools opting to allow non-whites must reserve most spaces for white children. At several schools beginning the new

term Wednesday, less than 20 percent of the students were non-whites.

Headmaster Niels Frylinck said Saxonwold Primary School wanted to remain small, despite opening admission to all races. A Parkview official said it lacked facilities to expand enrollment, limiting the number of new students.

Another factor limiting black enrollment was that apartheid laws prohibit non-white families from living in areas of white schools, forcing some black,

Indian and mixed-race children to make. lengthy commutes by taxi, bus or car.

President F.W. de Klerk has pledged to scrap remaining apartheid laws as he. makes reforms to give political power. to the black majority.

Under apartheid, the 5 million whites' control the government and economy, while the 30 million blacks have not national voting rights.

The education system has reflected ; apartheid's disparity. The government. spends five times more money on white students than on black. Black teachers, and students for years have staged protests and boycotts, further weakening black education. Results of graduation exams released recently showed 97. percent of white students and only 36. percent of black students passed.

High school nongraduates must prove college can help them

From Associated Press reports

College officials are fuming over a new federal rule requiring any students

The rule, affecting students ma-Act of 1990.

The idea behind the revised "ability to benefit" regulation is to weed out academically weak students most likely to default on federal college loans.

Many such default-prone students attend the nation's for-profit and trade schools as well as the 1,200 junior and community colleges.

Defaults on student loans totaled \$2 billion in fiscal year 1990, and have reached an accumulated \$8 billion, according to U.S. Department of Education statistics.

A subsequent interpretation of the new regulation by the Education Department, printed in the Federal Register on Dec. 19, has stunned many higher educators by extending the testing requirement to all students lacking high school credentials, not just those applying for federal loans.

The department so far has listed 14 standardized tests students can take to demonstrate they can succeed in higher education. The best-known include the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the ACT Assessment, the GED high school equivalency exam, the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, and several other widely used tests measuring skills such as math, reading and language. Passing scores would vary from institution to institution depending on the student population served, according to the regulations. Community college officials and forprofit school operators claim the new rule unfairly jeopardizes thousands of their students, especially immigrant, minority and older students, who frequently lack high school degrees. "I think it will devastate this college district," Donald Phelps, chancellor of the 110,000-student Los Angeles Community College District, said in a telephone interview. He said 67 percent of the district's students were ethnic minorities or foreign-born, and many are likely to fall under the rule.

tional Association of Trade and Technical Schools representing 1,300 for-profit schools, called the new rule "educa-" tional apartheid."

He said in an interview Wednesday that more than 100,000 of the 660,000" students attending trade schools nationwide lack high school credentials, and could face the loss of aid.

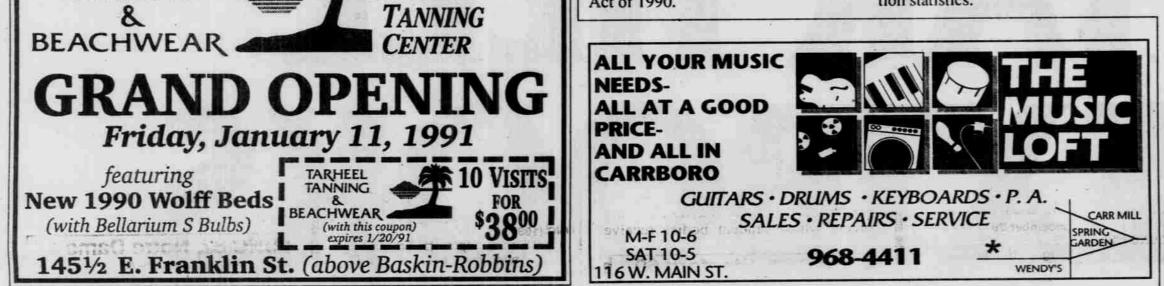
Blair said the rule also raised the. issue of whether the standardized tests listed by the department are biased ? against minorities. He said his group was considering seeking an injunction against the rule.

lacking a high school diploma or its equivalent to take a government-approved test to prove they can benefit from higher education.

triculating after Jan. 1, was adopted with little fanfare by Congress in November as one of hundreds of provisions of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation

cally on the jungle gym and in the "It's the same as always," said Ari

Two girls, one white and one black,



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Like many community colleges, those in Los Angeles already administer tests to prospective students. But such tests typically are diagnostic in nature.

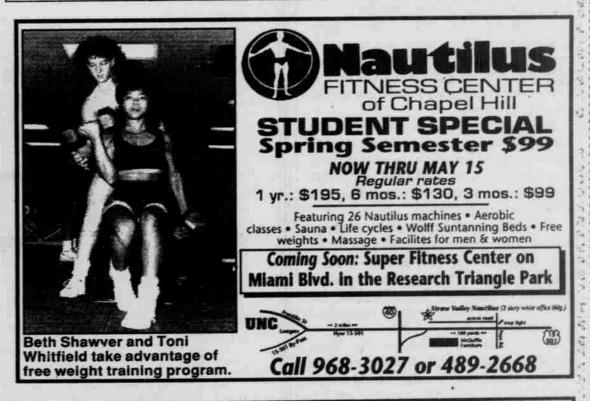
Stephen Blair, president of the Na-

Education Department spokeswoman . Etta Fielek stressed in an interview that the list of tests in the federal register was only partial and would undoubtedly grow when final regulations are pub- ;lished. She said the department intended to mail colleges the names of several w additional approved tests on Thursday.

The ability-to-benefit regulation already has prompted two federal lawsuits. One, brought Jan. 2 by California's community college system, resulted in a temporary restraining order in that state until at least Jan. 14, when further hearings are set.

Some 90,000 of the 1.5 million enrolled in California's two-year colleges are non-high school graduates, according to chancellor David Mertes.

The other suit was brought in Washington, D.C., by Wonderlic Personnel Tests Inc., a test publisher whose exams were left off the initial list. The Education Department settled that suit Monday by adding the tests to its interim list.

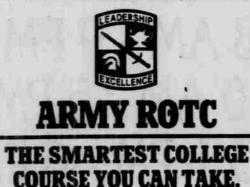


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